



WELFARE PEER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NETWORK

Supporting Work Attachment and Job Retention in the Rural States



Whispering Woods Hotel and Conference Center
Olive Branch, Mississippi
November 7th-8th, 2007

DAY ONE

8:30 – 9:00 AM

Registration and Networking

9:00 – 9:30 AM

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Janie Tapp, Administration for Children and Families Region IV
Richard "Rickey" Berry, Mississippi Department of Human Services
Al Fleming, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

9:30 – 10:30 AM

Setting the Context

This session includes two presentations designed to establish a common baseline and shared language around the issues facing work attachment and job retention for TANF clients in Mississippi.

9:30 – 10:00 AM

Mississippi Priorities

Cheryl Sparkman, Mississippi Department of Human Services
Mississippi will give an overview of their program as well as motivations around submitting this TA Request.

10:00 – 10:30 AM

Research Perspective on Job Attachment and Retention

Welfare Peer TA Network
Welfare Peer TA will give an overview of national research on what supports are necessary to facilitate job attachment for TANF clients who have relocated.

10:30 – 10:45 AM

Break

10:45 – 12:00 PM

State Spotlight

This session will provide participants an opportunity to introduce themselves and describe the needs and challenges of facing job attachment and retention in their States.

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Spotlight on Mississippi

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Panel Presentation: Mississippi Research Perspective

Dr. Domenico "Mimmo" Parisi, Mississippi State University

Dr. Steven Grice, Mississippi State University

Dr. John Green, Delta State University

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Overview of Research on 'Job Matching' in the Welfare-to-Work Transition

Dr. Domenico "Mimmo" Parisi, Mississippi State University

Researchers from MSU published the report *Prospects for 'Job Matching' in the Welfare-to-Work Transition: Labor Market Capacity for Sustaining the Absorption of Mississippi's TANF Recipients*. In this session, the representative will provide an overview of the research and strategies for effective job matching for TANF recipients and TANF leavers.

2:30 – 3:00 PM

Overview of Mississippi Rural Economic Development Assistance Program

Pat Lewis, Mississippi Business Finance Corporation

The Mississippi Rural Economic Development Assistance Program (RED), administered by the Mississippi Business Finance Corporation (MBFC), is a program designed to enhance projects which are to be financed through the Industrial Development Revenue Bond Program (IRB) and the Small Enterprise Development Program (SED). Eligible companies under the IRB Program are manufacturing facilities, processing facilities, certain warehouse and distribution centers, certain telecommunication and data processing companies, multi-state national or regional headquarters, certain research and development and technology intensive enterprises.

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM **Break**

3:15 PM – 4:15 PM **Developing Regional Partnerships to Support Employment**

3:15 PM – 3:45 PM

North Dakota: Transitional Jobs Task Force

Tom Alexander, North Dakota Transitional Jobs Task Force

North Dakota implemented the TJ Task force to first respond to a need for reentry services in the State. The task force gathered in April 2006 to develop a TJ strategy, and included members from the business community, corrections, Chamber of Commerce, state legislators, and other supportive services programs. Today, the taskforce builds momentum for transitional job through sharing information and expertise across the community.

3:45 PM – 4:15 PM

Nevada: JobConnect System

Kelly Karch, Nevada JobConnect System

Nevada developed a partnership between the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, private businesses, and State of Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services. The program supports TANF clients finding and maintaining employment.

4:15 – 4:45 PM

**Building and Sustaining Employment-Focused TANF Programs
Cuyahoga County, Ohio: Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program**

Leisha Coggins, Cuyahoga County Employment and Family Services

The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency program was established to help families overcome immediate barriers to self-sufficiency as part of Ohio's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Benefits and services are for needy and low-income employed families who need short-term help to support an individual or a family during a crisis or episode of need. Families receiving assistance under other public assistance programs including Ohio Works First, Disability Financial Assistance and Food Stamps may also apply for Prevention, Retention and Contingency services and benefits at their local county department of job and family services.

4:45 – 5:00 PM

Day 1 Wrap-up & Day 2 Preview

Welfare Peer TA Network Staff

Al Fleming, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

This session will conclude Day 1 and introduce the activities for Day 2.

DAY TWO

8:30 – 9:00 AM

Day One Overview and Outlook for Day Two

Welfare Peer TA Network Staff

Al Fleming, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

9:00 – 10:00 AM

Engaging Employers to Support Workers in the Workplace

Representative, Governor Barbour's Office

Representative, Toyota

10:00 – 10:15 AM

Break

10:15 – 11:15 AM

State to State Dialogue

This time will allow the participant States to connect with one another to ask questions and learn about promising practices, which were highlighted in the introductory sessions and panel discussions. This is time for informal dialogue and interactive Q & A. The purpose of this session is to encourage the formation of new partnerships and collaboration among participants.

11:15 – 12:30 PM

Action Planning

Participants will break into working groups by State to address the action items deemed most critical. Teams will be provided action-planning tools to support and facilitate their discussions. These tools will ask participants to capture their current strengths, challenges, opportunities, and resources -- both available and needed -- on the given topic.

12:30 – 1:00 PM

Action Planning Report Outs

1:00 PM

Closing Remarks & Evaluation

Al Fleming, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance

Welfare Peer TA Network Staff